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ABSTRACT

The report evaluates the impact of present education laws on deaf and hard-of-hearing children in Washington State and clarifies issues that require action. Recommendations are cited for improvements in placement decisions (in the context of least restrictive environment), support services, early intervention, and referral and assessment. Standard personnel competencies for professionals are suggested, and both preservice and inservice training are recommended for early childhood professionals who work with deaf or hard-of-hearing children in early intervention programs. Short-range recommendations focus on such disparate issues as the needs of multihandicapped deaf/hard-of-hearing students, parent education, rural services, standards for educational interpreting services, and designation of a uniform sign language system for public school classroom instruction. Recommendations to public schools suggest improvements in the qualifications of support services staff, interpreter services, evaluation of children's educational needs, and continuity in available services. Recommendations to the Washington State School for the Deaf are also cited. A final section addresses the need to establish and promote resource coordination and networking within and for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. (JW)

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Unrealized Promises:

Ensuring The Educational Rights Of Deaf/Hard Of Hearing Youth

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UNREALIZED PROMISES:
ENSURING THE EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS
OF DEAF/HARD OF HEARING YOUTH
FORWARD
1986

PREPARED BY: Work Group on Education of Deaf/Hard of Hearing Youth - Patty Hughes, Leader

SPONSORED BY: Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment, Washington State Department of Employment Security

MISSION:

This report addresses the impact of present education laws on deaf/hard of hearing children in Washington State. The issues and recommendations presented in this report focus on improving all education programs for Washington's deaf and hard of hearing children.

In 1975 Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, was passed by Congress. This legislation provided for a free and appropriate public education for all children with handicapping conditions. It was beneficial for the majority of disabled children. However, the impact of Public Law 94-142 on deaf/hard of hearing children has not been entirely positive.

Today nearly 1,300 deaf/hard of hearing children participate in public education programs in Washington State. Work Group members fear that too many of these children are receiving a sub-standard education and are failing because they are often inappropriately placed. When a child's educational needs go unmet in one program, parents are forced to seek urgently for other programs. Often, even these programs are unable to meet the child's educational needs.

Also of concern is that support services required by law are not adequately provided to deaf/hard of hearing children in some local school districts. Because there are a variety of state, local and private educational programs offered at many different locations, educational services are not consistently delivered statewide. This especially impacts deaf/hard of hearing children who have unique and individual educational needs, particularly in communication and language development. Because being deaf/hard of hearing is a low incidence disability, it is difficult for educational systems to provide appropriate social interaction opportunities and role models, similar to those available to non-disabled students. In order to provide an appropriate education for this population, Washington's educational systems must be provided with the resources and technical support necessary to meet the unique needs of these children.

This report identifies and clarifies issues that need immediate action related to education of deaf/hard of hearing children in Washington State. Included are many specific recommendations and basic background information

to support those recommendations. In some instances suggestions have been made regarding which organization or system is most appropriate to address a specific issue.

NOTE: Please note the following definitions of terms which apply to this report. Also, see appendix for definitions in law.

DEAF/DEAFNESS

A condition in which perceivable sounds, including speech, have no meaning for ordinary life purposes. The impairment is the physical damage to the auditory pathway. The disability is the loss of hearing. The primary handicap is being cut off from normal language acquisition and transmission, which affects communication. Variables in coping with the handicap of deafness are native intelligence, personality, family environment, age of onset of deafness, degree and type of deafness, language background, residual hearing, listening skills, speech reading and speech abilities, and educational preparation.

HARD OF HEARING

A condition where the sense of hearing is defective but functional for ordinary life purposes, usually with the help of a hearing aid.

(Definitions from "The Deaf Population of the United States," Schein and Delk and National Technical Institute for the Deaf Publications.)

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NOTE: Please see appendix for description of the work group and sub-group process and, for an alphabetical listing of all participants, guests and observers.

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CHAPTER 1

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

ISSUE: Definition of Least Restrictive Environment for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Every deaf/hard of hearing child has the right to a free and appropriate public education that is designed to meet his or her unique educational needs, set in a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). There are important distinctions to be made in applying the LRE concept to the individual and unique needs of deaf/hard of hearing children. The commonly used interpretation of LRE does not address the specialized and related services needed for deaf/hard of hearing children.

BACKGROUND: The least restrictive environment means that among all alternatives for placement, students with special needs can obtain the educational services appropriate to meet their unique learning needs as close to and as nearly like a regular classroom setting as possible.

The least restrictive environment for a deaf or hard of hearing child is one in which language learning opportunities abound: one in which communication flows freely and continuously; and one in which the child is helped to feel confident in his own self worth and self-esteem.

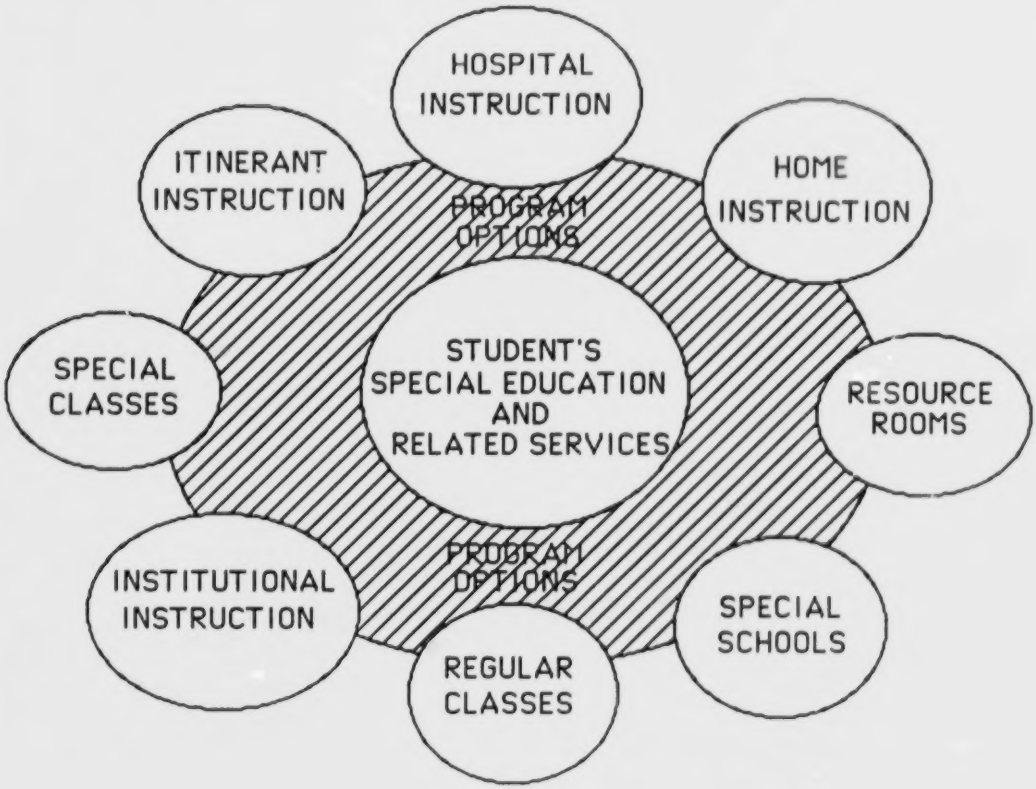
In considering the LRE for educational placements, the emphasis should focus on (1) the intensity of the student's communication, educational and developmental needs as determined by a competent evaluation; (2) the long term prognosis for educational needs; and (3) the academic and career potential of the student. Placement recommendations should be made based on a multi-disciplinary team's* best judgment, with parent and, where appropriate, student participation. This determines the program that best meets the student's needs without compromising the student's ability to achieve his/her academic or career potential.

The determination or selection of the most appropriate placement from the alternative placement options should be based only on the ability of that option to meet the special education and related service needs of the student.

NOTE: See attached diagram.

* A multi-disciplinary team is a group of professionals including at least one special education teacher and at least one person qualified to conduct individual diagnostic assessment in the area of suspected disability. Each member of the team shall be licensed, registered, credentialed or certificated according to his or her professional standards in accordance with state statutes and rules.

DIAGRAM FOR CONTINUUM OF PLACEMENT ALTERNATIVES



This diagram shows a circular placement model which represents placement alternatives available for children who are deaf/hard of hearing. Each alternative is equal with all others. The key to selection is the option which best meets the needs of the child.

Diagrams published to date by others reveal a hierarchy of choices that implies that a higher choice is the more appropriate selection. This gives false ranking without consideration for the child's needs. There cannot be a hierarchy.

This placement model was developed by Dr. Berry Griffing, Superintendent of Arizona School for the Deaf, and approved by a group of superintendents of state residential schools in January 1986.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Policy Concepts for Least Restrictive Environment

It is recommended that the following policy concepts for Least Restrictive Environment be implemented.

1. Placement is based upon a competent and comprehensive evaluation and an individual education plan (IEP).

2. Placement involves the parent(s) of the student, and, when appropriate, the student.

3. Placement options are given equal consideration as appropriate to meet the needs of the child.

4. As the determined needs of an individual child change, placement decisions must be reevaluated.

5. The evaluation and placement of a deaf/hard of hearing child must address developmental (personal, social, emotional) needs as a significant component of meeting educational needs.

6. Statutory requirements or protections must be assured for all deaf/hard of hearing students in any placement option.

7. In discussing the needs of the child, all placement options must be given equal consideration and the IEP must document that such consideration was given.

8. In the IEP process the parent(s) must be fully informed of placement options and must have direct involvement in the placement decision.

NOTE: These concepts have been endorsed by a group of superintendents of state residential schools, meeting in January 1986, and by the Education Committee of the Washington State Association of the Deaf.

ISSUE: Assessment and Evaluation

Public Law 94-142 and the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) require that in order to determine eligibility, placement and a plan for the Individual Education Program (IEP), a student who is deaf/hard of hearing be assessed for:

- academic achievement
- social/emotional adjustment
- language development
- audiological status
- vision status

Currently there is no specific provision made in the WACs for establishing how the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is to be determined.

BACKGROUND: The WACs specify that a student shall be placed in a regular classroom, if that is considered to be least restrictive, and that the classroom preferably be in the student's "home" school. There is a bias toward assuming the regular classroom to be "least restrictive" for all students. This can have negative consequences for the deaf/hard of hearing student. Many factors which affect the "restrictiveness" of an environment must be considered prior to the Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) recommendation for placement. These factors include: access to other students with similar communication needs; grouping with academic peers; the availability of counseling and vocational services; etc. Least Restrictive Environment must be assessed for each student on an individual basis, with a full range of placement options considered.

The lack of qualified multi-disciplinary teams is a concern. Although some qualified individuals do exist, a completely qualified multi-disciplinary team does not exist at this time in the majority of program serving deaf/hard of hearing students.

Every program serving educational needs may not have the facilities and personnel to carry out a complete assessment. A complete assessment may have to be carried out in a locale different from the one in which educational services may ultimately be provided. Evaluation of the student should be continuous, or at least at stated intervals. Placement changes may be indicated as the student grows and develops, and his/her needs change.

Assessment results should be summarized and reported to the IEP team, which makes the final placement decision with the student's parents, or adult student. Recommendations are to include special education placement in the "least restrictive environment," support services the student requires, and specific areas of instruction.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Assessment and Evaluation

The individual student level of academic achievement, social/emotional adjustment, language development, audiological and vision status must each be assessed by the member of the multi-disciplinary team qualified to address that area. Team members shall include, but not be limited to: a psychologist, a language specialist, an educational audiologist, an educational specialist trained in deafness, and a school nurse.

It is imperative that personnel involved in the assessment of deaf/hard of hearing students have a background in deafness, an understanding of the unique communication needs, skills in communication and knowledge of the appropriate application of assessment tools to persons who are deaf/hard of hearing, including necessary modifications.

CHAPTER 2

SUPPORT SERVICES

ISSUE: Adequate and appropriate support services to achieve Least Restrictive Environment for deaf/hard of hearing children.

BACKGROUND:

Too many deaf/hard of hearing children are receiving a sub-standard education. Their educational needs go unmet due to lack of appropriate and adequate support services to meet their individual needs. Many individuals who are currently working with deaf/hard of hearing children are not specifically trained in the field of deafness. For instance, there is too much reliance on non-certified "interpreters" who have only minimal sign language skills -- which means that deaf/hard of hearing children are not receiving a standard education.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Standard Personnel Competencies for Professionals

The state of Washington should set standard personnel competencies for professionals working with deaf/hard of hearing children in educational settings. The recommended personnel competencies are described as follows.

PERSONNEL COMPETENCIES

Personnel hired to provide direct services to deaf/hard of hearing students must meet the following criteria in addition to their individual job competencies:

- Proficiency in American Sign Language/Manual Coded English (ASL/MCE) communication and/or ability to use a certified sign language interpreter.
- Training/experience in working with deaf/hard of hearing students.
- Certification as required by Washington State.
- Ability to address individual language variables.
- Understanding and appreciation of deaf culture.

EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETER (MANUAL)

- Manual communication interpreters at the secondary level should be required to obtain certification by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or demonstrate equivalent proficiency.

- Manual interpreters at the elementary level should be required to pass a state evaluation. This evaluation should be developed by the Washington State Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (WSRID) and should cover such areas as language facility, interpretive skill, technical aspects and the code of ethics.

EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETER (ORAL)

- Oral communication interpreters at the secondary level should be required to obtain RID certification or demonstrate equivalent proficiency.

- Oral communication interpreters at the elementary level should be required to pass a state evaluation. This evaluation should be developed by the Washington State Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (WSRID) and should cover such areas as language facility, interpretive skill, technical aspects, and the code of ethics.

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Ability to monitor auditory trainers, hearing aids, and accessories.

- Ability to record student data.

- Proficiency in ASL/MCE in total communication programs.

- Ability to assist in implementation of teacher designed activities.

COMMUNICATION DISORDERS SPECIALIST (CDS)

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of speech and language development for hearing and deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Knowledge of communication needs of deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Ability to design and implement speech/language intervention programs for deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Knowledge/experience in using materials designed specifically for deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Ability to coordinate speech/language programs for deaf/hard of hearing students with teachers, other program staff, and parents.

- Knowledge of different communication systems used by deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Knowledge of speech and language assessment techniques for use with deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Working knowledge of auditory training equipment.

- Ability to provide consultative services and education to the student, student's family and school staff regarding speech and language needs.

AUDIOLOGIST

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of speech and language development for both hearing and deaf/hard of hearing children.

- Competency in the use of sign language or ability to use a certified sign language interpreter.

- Knowledge of various audiologic assessment techniques.

- Knowledge of current amplification equipment and testing instruments and their maintenance.

- Knowledge of community resources.

- Ability to work as part of a team with teacher and CDS in the area of auditory training.

- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff regarding audiological needs.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST/PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Training (pre-service or in-service) focused on disabilities related to hearing impairment, such as balance and mobility.

- Willingness to learn sign language to facilitate work with deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff regarding occupational/physical therapy needs.

SCHOOL NURSE

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Contacts with community physicians involved with deaf/hard of hearing students.
- Knowledge of the physiology of deafness and training in screening of Usher's Syndrome and knowledge of other syndromes related with deafness.
- Ability to provide liaison with parents.
- Willingness to learn sign language to facilitate work with deaf/hard of hearing students in total communication programs.
- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff regarding health needs.

NOTE TAKER

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Ability to write legibly and spell accurately.
- Ability to extract relevant/important information as presented by speaker.
- Ability to utilize a consistent and clear format which meets the needs of the student.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Competency in the use of sign language or ability to use a certified sign language interpreter.
- Knowledge of and ability to select and administer assessment tools appropriate for deaf/hard of hearing individuals, due to psycho-social and cultural language differences.
- Ability to translate assessment information into statements of student strengths and weaknesses with recommendations for remediation/intervention.
- Knowledge of social and emotional development stages of deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Ability to consult with staff (teacher, counselor, etc.) regarding individual student and classroom problems (i.e., set up behavioral management program).

- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff regarding psychological needs.

SOCIAL WORKER

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of and ability to do initial intake/assessment of deaf/hard of hearing individuals and/or immediate families.

- Ability to identify issues related to family dynamics and make appropriate referrals.

- Ability to coordinate appropriate service with agencies/service providers as well as personnel within the school.

- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Training from a specialized program in the area of deafness.

- Knowledge of the psycho-social development of the deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Understanding of appropriate vocational and academic assessment tools for deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Ability to counsel and work with students to assist them in developing realistic vocational goals based on interpretation of vocational and academic findings.

- Coordinate students involvement in career exploration.

VOCATIONAL EVALUATOR

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Ability to select, administer and interpret appropriate vocational assessment tools for deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Knowledge of local resources and job market trends.

- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff regarding vocational needs.

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

Persons seeking certification/employment in this classification should be required to demonstrate the following:

- Training to provide mental health services to preschool through high school age students and their families.

- Knowledge of the social and emotional development of deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Ability to consult with staff regarding individual students and classroom problems.

- Ability to assist in evaluation and treatment planning of students.

- Ability to develop and implement family involvement plan in coordination with Parent Trainers.

- Ability to provide consultative services, education and program coordination to the student, student's family and school staff regarding mental health needs.

CHAPTER 3

EARLY INTERVENTION: 0 - 5 YEARS

ISSUE: Services for Children Aged 0-5 Years

BACKGROUND:

Research has repeatedly demonstrated that the early years--the period between birth and five years of age--are critical to a child's growth, especially in cognitive, language, and social-emotional development. When a hearing impairment occurs, this interrupts or affects development in these areas. The long range impact can be devastating and costly--both to the child and his/her family. They must bear the burden of the consequences on a daily, personal level. The state's burden is a "real dollars" issue. Early intervention, usually consisting of parent education, counseling support, and direct services for the child, is an effective way to enhance development and learning. Early intervention can reduce the costly long term deficits that can result when intervention does not occur.

Because of their different services needs, birth to three, and three through five age groups should be considered separately. These age groupings are used by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

RECOMMENDATION 4: Services for Children Aged 0-5 Years

1. That 0 - 3 year olds and 3 - 5 year olds be considered and served as two separate groups; and

2. That an advisory committee, be established by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, to address concerns related to the 0 - 5 age groups.

ISSUE: Referral of Deaf/Hard of Hearing Children

BACKGROUND:

Recent technological advances in the field of audiology/audiometry allow the hearing of infants and young children to be tested and hearing loss identified at a very young age. Medical professionals are often unaware of this, and/or may not be cognizant of the symptoms/signs of hearing impairment. Parents who express concerns regarding their child's hearing to their family pediatrician or general practitioner too often do not receive a prompt referral to an audiologist. Parents whose child has had a hearing loss identified are sometimes not referred to an appropriate program serving families with deaf/hard of hearing children, and valuable time may be wasted while the family attempts to track down services.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Referral of Deaf/Hard of Hearing Children

That an organized effort be made at the state level to provide information to personnel in the medical profession and related fields regarding hearing impairment, its symptoms and signs, assessment, and existing programs serving families with deaf/hard of hearing infants and children.

ISSUE: Assessment of Deaf/Hard of Hearing Infants and Children

BACKGROUND:

Hearing impairment often occurs in conjunction with various disabilities (e.g., visual impairment, cognitive delay, fine and/or gross motor problems). It is essential that infants and children who are known to have a hearing loss be given an adequate assessment of their skills in other developmental areas.

Use of appropriate tests and trained personnel is an assessment issue. Few tests of intelligence, social-emotional adjustment, or receptive/expressive language have been normed on deaf/hard of hearing children. The use of assessment tools for deaf/hard of hearing children which are designed for hearing children violates standards for maintaining a test's validity, and may result in formulation of inappropriate educational goals. Adequate assessment of a deaf/hard of hearing child's skills requires considerable expertise on the tester's part, as well as appropriate tests.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Assessment of Deaf/Hard of Hearing Infants and Children

1. That the developmental skills of deaf/hard of hearing children aged birth to three years old be screened and monitored regularly by appropriately trained personnel, and that referrals be made for more thorough diagnostic testing when warranted; and

2. That personnel employed in assessing skills and competencies of deaf/hard of hearing children be well-trained, have experience in communicating with deaf children, be familiar with appropriate tests and procedures, and have an understanding of how to interpret test results, especially when adaptations of standardized tests must be made.

ISSUE: The Family's Role

BACKGROUND:

The family is the primary environment for children under three years old. Optimal outcomes are most likely to occur when the family is able to provide a supportive and nurturing environment. Family-oriented intervention programs, in which parents and professionals function in a collaborative fashion, recognize the importance of the family's role in the development of young deaf/hard of hearing children. Such collaboration serves to support the child while helping the family as a whole to cope, in adaptive ways, with the daily stress involved in having a child with special needs.

Family involvement remains a critical component in a child's educational program through the years three to five, as does support for the family. This support may be in the form of individual or group counseling and sign language instruction. Sign language instruction at varied skill levels and designed for families of deaf/hard of hearing children should be offered regularly and at varying times to allow for maximum family involvement. Parent support groups facilitated by trained counselors should be available for parents of deaf/hard of hearing children of all ages.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Family's Role

1. That the diverse needs of families be recognized, and that programs remain flexible enough to meet those needs. These services may be offered by an individual program or through cooperative efforts made by several agencies; and

2. That teachers and parents of three to five year olds cooperate in developing educational goals appropriate to each deaf/hard of hearing child.

   Every possible effort and technique should be used to ensure that parents stay actively involved in sign language instruction and are encouraged to participate in parent groups.

ISSUE: Comprehensive Services and Inter-Agency Coordination for the 0-3 Age Group*

BACKGROUND:

A range of interventions may be necessary for the birth to three year old deaf/hard of hearing child and family. These services involve a variety of disciplines and agencies, including: identification, screening, diagnostic evaluation and assessment, medical and health management, developmental or educational services, supportive services for family members, specific therapies and related services. Not all children and families will require every service.

To adequately provide comprehensive services for deaf/hard of hearing children and families, a system of multiple agency planning and provision of services may be required. This approach makes maximum use of community resources and reduces duplication of services. While an interagency approach should designate a single agency as responsible for administering the early intervention program, it should also require that planners address the process of coordination of services and resources among state agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Comprehensive Services and Inter-Agency Coordination for the 0-3 Age Group

1. That services related to the child's hearing impairment be the responsibility of an early intervention program. Other supportive services should be available and coordinated with appropriate community

agencies (e.g., developmental disabilities centers). The services required to meet the unique developmental needs of the child and family should be contained in an individualized service program.

2. That a "lead agency" (usually a program for deaf/hard of hearing infants and families, unless the hearing impairment is not the primary concern), coordinate the planning and implementation of services for an individual child and family, and be responsible for communication among involved agencies.

ISSUE: Training of Personnel*

BACKGROUND:

There is a severe lack of adequately trained early childhood professionals with knowledge or experience related to deafness. Many individuals who are currently working with young deaf/hard of hearing children are not trained to meet their unique developmental needs or those of their families. Both pre-service and in-service training efforts are needed to adequately prepare and maintain qualified personnel for early intervention programs (0 - 3 years old) and for older preschoolers (3 - 5 years old). Knowledge and skill are needed in areas such as child development, cognitive development theory, family interaction, language acquisition, deafness as a cultural phenomenon, and sign language competency, etc.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Training of Personnel

That the state of Washington set standards, address issues of licensure and/or certification for preschool level personnel (3 - 5 year olds), and make provision for appropriate pre-service training programs and in-service training. Federal programs which support the training of early intervention personnel and provide technical assistance to other agencies or programs that occasionally serve deaf/hard of hearing children should be continued, and in some respects enhanced.

NOTE: Items marked with an asterisk (*) have been adapted from a Statement of the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children; March 1986.

CHAPTER 4

TODAY'S CHILD

ISSUE: Critical Needs of Today's Child

Today's deaf/hard of hearing children have critical needs which require immediate attention. It is imperative that appropriate services be provided for students in all educational systems throughout the state. The recommendations in this chapter focus on short range emergent issues that must be immediately addressed in order to improve the lives and education of today's child and tomorrow's children. Recommendations include the following:

- Coordinate services and address the specialized placement needs of emotionally/behaviorially disturbed deaf/hard of hearing youth ("troubled deaf youth").
- Establish a statewide Evaluation Team.
- Establish educational interpreting service standards.
- Address the needs of multi-handicapped deaf/hard of hearing students.
- Educate and advise parents of today's children.
- Provide rural families with appropriate programs, information and resources.

Please note that these recommendations are not in prioritized order.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Troubled Deaf Youth

Coordinate services and address the specialized placement needs of emotionally/behaviorally disturbed deaf/hard of hearing youth:

- Develop a unified service plan including cooperative complimentary proposals from each state agency which has a mandate to address a part of the needs of this high need population. Promote the implementation of that plan.
- Establish an advisory body to assure that appropriate, qualified, and adequate services and resources are secured when the proposed program is implemented. This advisory group should include representatives from the educational system (for programs of deaf/hard of hearing school children), the social service system (particularly the DSHS divisions of Mental Health, Children and Family Services, Developmental Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation), and concerned consumers (i.e., parents and deaf professionals and others).

BACKGROUND:

At present, Washington State does not have specialized placement resources for children and young adults who are deaf/hard of hearing and emotionally disturbed. Periodically, children needing high levels of supervision and treatment have been placed in out-of-state facilities of unknown quality and higher expense.

There is a need to provide a program of specialized educational and rehabilitative services for emotionally disturbed children who are deaf/hard of hearing. Remediation may be community based treatment: a) in community supervised living situations; b) in the home with the family; c) in specialized foster care (CHAPS-model); and/or d) in a school campus setting.

A 1984-85 survey conducted jointly by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and several divisions of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) (Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Vocational Rehabilitation) identified about 45 "troubled deaf youth" candidates for specialized services. The children with the most severe needs cannot be maintained at the public schools or at the Washington State School for the Deaf. Some less disturbed children do receive a patchwork of services within the state. However, none of these pieced together efforts has adequately met the education, supervised living, or training needs involved. Available expertise for serving this population is limited statewide and is concentrated in the King County area.

With the cumulative communication and cultural barriers faced by deaf children (usually growing up in hearing families and struggling with different educational options), it is not surprising that the prevalence of emotional/behavioral disturbances among hearing impaired children is three to six times higher than that among non-hearing impaired children. Consequently, the state educational and social service system has a special responsibility to establish and implement an effective program which will meet the needs of those "troubled deaf youth" and prevent worse problems in adulthood.

Until about October 1983, Ryther Center in Seattle had a small program to serve this population; however, due to various management and financial complications, it did not continue. Interagency efforts by the Coordinator of Statewide Mental Health Services for Hearing Impaired Persons and representatives from the divisions of Children and Family Services, Developmental Disabilities, and Mental Health formulated new proposals for residential treatment services. The first proposal described a specialized 12-bed residential treatment facility for emotionally/behaviorally disturbed deaf youth, with staff trained in deafness and appropriate support services. That proposal was ultimately tabled due to state budget woes. More recently a proposal was drafted, involving the provision of services to this population through the concept of supervised apartment living (i.e., "tenant support program"), based on the Children's Hospital Alternatives Program (CHAPS) and the Community Integration Through Effective Support (CITES) models. This included specialized deafness-related resources. The Division of Children and Family Services has assumed lead responsibility for

submitting this proposal within the Department of Social and Health Services budget decision packages process for legislative consideration. A companion package to provide intensive special education and related services is being proposed by the OSPI's division of Special Services and Professional Programs. If implemented, the funding and administration of a placement program for this population would be handled jointly by the DSHS divisions of Children and Family Services, Mental Health, and Developmental Disabilities, in cooperation with programs for deaf/hard of hearing students at OSPI.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Establish a Statewide Evaluation Team
(See Recommendation 2.)

Establish a statewide evaluation team to both assess and assist the districts' Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) with the placement of the student in his/her most appropriate educational setting. This team may provide ongoing information and assistance as the student is reviewed periodically for Extended School Year (ESY), annual IEPs including support services specific to each child, promotion, etc.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Establish Educational Interpreting Services Standards
(See Recommendation 3.)

Establish educational interpreting services standards through a cooperative effort of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington State Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, and other interested groups. Certification standards should be established for educational interpreters, including necessary field based training to upgrade skills of educational interpreters, and to educate administrators, teachers, and interpreters on appropriate rules and responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Address the Needs of Multi-handicapped Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students

Coordinate program planning, which is prescriptive by design but with flexibility for considerable overlapping with ongoing evaluation of function, goals and methods. Establish a standardized needs assessment which is administered by trained and competent staff.

RECOMMENDATION 14: Inform and Advise Parents of Today's Children

Provide guidance and information for parents to enable them to cope with and enhance the lives of their deaf/hard of hearing children. Enforce both federal and state regulations which clearly specify "social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training"... "as are required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education."

RECOMMENDATION 15: Provide Rural Families with Appropriate Programs, Information, and Resources

It is recommended that upon identification of a deaf/hard of hearing child and family living in a rural area, a qualified Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) of educational specialists meet with the local school district to provide information and to consider a student's placement options with regard to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), performance, potential, etc.

It is recommended that rural families of deaf/hard of hearing children be provided with information and services through several means:

- Membership in a statewide organization for families with deaf/hard of hearing children (which includes a newsletter) such as the Washington State Society for Deaf Children.

- Preparation and distribution of a packet of information designed for parents, consisting of educational materials, information on P.L. 94-142, a bibliography on deafness, addresses of relevant organizations, pertinent publications, etc.

- Access to videotaped sign language lessons and VCR equipment through the Washington State School for the Deaf, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and/or Educational Service Districts.

- A team visit (for example, by a counselor and parent-infant specialist) upon initial diagnosis and at semi-annual intervals, to be made to the family and to any local personnel who may be working with the child and family. Also, a toll-free hotline number could be established as a means of connecting parents with these services.

Students from rural families need appropriate educational programs and parents need information and resource contacts about education and deafness. Washington State has several programs serving families with deaf/hard of hearing infants and children, through home visits and/or classroom (play-group) experiences. Some areas of the state, however, are either underserved or offer no services for families with deaf/hard of hearing children. This is especially true of Eastern Washington. Families living in rural areas often feel totally isolated and frustrated in their attempts to find information and appropriate services for their deaf/hard of hearing children. They also are often ignorant of their rights as parents under P.L. 94-142. They are ill-equipped to know what constitutes an appropriate educational program for a deaf/hard of hearing child.

Both parents and their local school district may lack sufficient information and experience to plan an adequate program for the child. This may result in the hiring of support personnel (e.g., a classroom aide/interpreter) with inadequate skills in an attempt to provide a "mainstreamed" program, or an inappropriate placement (e.g., in a resource room with children with other special needs, taught by a teacher with no background or skills in deaf education). Other more appropriate options, such as contracting with the closest school district maintaining a hearing impaired program or enrollment in the state school, may not even be considered.

RECOMMENDATION 16: Identify Uniform Modes of Sign Language for Classroom Instruction

Identify and designate a uniform sign language system for classroom instruction of deaf/hard of hearing students in public school programs throughout the state. The Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE) should sponsor a study group to determine which modes of sign language are to be used in classrooms.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ISSUE: There are many challenging issues confronting local school districts regarding the education of deaf/hard of hearing students in Washington State. Some of these issues are:

- Poorly qualified support service staff;
- Lack of support staff services in some districts;
- Administrative staff who are uninformed regarding deafness and its implications for education;
- Improper identification of the child's needs due to poorly qualified evaluators;
- Need for adjustments which will make appropriate LRE placements for deaf and hard of hearing students. (The definition of LRE is a vital issue in the education of these students. See Recommendation 1.);
- Lack of appropriate interpreter services;
- Lack of awareness about statewide resources that are available to teachers, students, parents, and local school district personnel;
- Lack of coordination of services between the Washington State School for the Deaf and local school districts;
- Lack of continuity in available services and services provided to deaf and hard of hearing students between school districts in the state of Washington.

BACKGROUND:

As of March 1986, 994 hearing impaired students were receiving services in public schools in Washington State; 335 of those students were deaf and 659 were hard of hearing.

Service options in the public schools of Washington State include:

- Mainstreaming all day in a regular classroom without an interpreter;
- Mainstreaming all day in a regular classroom with an interpreter;
- Pulling a student out of a regular classroom for tutoring or instruction in specific subject areas in a special education classroom;

- Itinerant services from a teacher of the hearing impaired or speech therapist. (Itinerant instruction typically involves educators or other related professionals who travel from place to place -- school to school, district to district);

- Part-time, self contained, deaf/hard of hearing classroom and part-time regular classroom, with or without an interpreter (a self-contained classroom typically involves all basic elements of instruction);

- A self-contained classroom for deaf/hard of hearing students all day;

- Placement outside the public school in a private or non-public school agency; and

- Placement at Washington State School for the Deaf.

These program services may occur in local school districts which provide services for only one deaf/hard of hearing student or for as many as 76 deaf/hard of hearing students. The numbers vary from district to district around the state of Washington.

RECOMMENDATION 17: In-service Training

Provide the following public school personnel with inservice training on Section 504, of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, and on other pertinent laws, regulations and guidelines.

- All certified staff

- Classified staff

- Administrators

- Support staff (communication disorder specialist, psychologist, nurse, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.)

RECOMMENDATION 18: Information About Resources and Services at the Washington State School for the Deaf

Inform Public School personnel of resources available through the Washington State School For the Deaf (WSSD) and encourage use of those services.

Provide public school personnel with information regarding the outreach assessment team at WSSD. The GCDE deaf education sub-group should continue to work on a long-range plan to provide additional assessment resources throughout the state.

RECOMMENDATION 19: Information on Placement Alternatives

Provide public school personnel with information on the matrix of placement alternatives available in both public school and residential school environments. This information will help public schools make a program placement decision for individual deaf/hard of hearing students.

RECOMMENDATION 20: Regional Teams of Experts in Deaf Education
(See Recommendation 1.)

Public school personnel should utilize the outreach assessment team at WSSD (pending development) and assist in establishing regional teams of professionals who are trained and experienced in deaf education. The regional teams should be designed to:

- Go to individual districts to evaluate programs; to provide support and continuity among school districts; and to be an advocate for deaf/hard of hearing students.

- Work in partnership with the team based at WSSD.

RECOMMENDATION 21: Local Community Resources, Services, and Census

Regional teams should elect a person, from the team, to help local districts to connect with local resources. School districts should be encouraged to use local community services to:

- Keep and verify a census of deaf/hard of hearing children and adults within their locale.

- Provide guidance and information to the parents of deaf/hard of hearing children.

- Help parents understand the options for their deaf/hard of hearing son or daughter.

- Inform doctors, especially ear, nose and throat physicians and pediatricians, regarding services and resources available for referral.

RECOMMENDATION 22: Provide Technical Assistance to Directors of Special Education

Regional teams will provide technical assistance to Directors of Special Education statewide.

RECOMMENDATION 23: Statewide "Road Show"

It is recommended that the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) develop an informative "Road Show" to take to various areas throughout the state. Some suggestions for the "Road Show" are:

- To provide a resource panel of those people who provide services.

- To provide an opportunity to share materials and resources.

- To provide regular classroom teachers with "survival" hints.

- To have deaf and hard of hearing adults talk about growing up with their hearing loss.

- To give advice on how to find and use a qualified interpreter.

RECOMMENDATION 24: Provide Public Schools with Information and Encouragement About Hiring Deaf/Hard of Hearing Teachers

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF (WSSD)

ISSUE: Evaluation of the role of the Washington State School for the Deaf in educating Washington State's deaf/hard of hearing youth.

BACKGROUND:

In addressing the impact of present education laws on deaf and hard of hearing children in Washington State, the role of the Washington State School for the Deaf is of utmost importance. One effect of Public Law 94-142, The Education For All Handicapped Children Act, has been a larger percentage of deaf/hard of hearing children educated by the local school districts and a smaller percentage by the state school for the deaf.

In recent testimony before the Select Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, Madeline C. Will, the Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, reported that "as a result of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), provisions of P.L. 94-142, the percentage of hearing impaired children in public schools has increased while the percentage of residential school placements has decreased ... twenty-six percent of elementary and secondary deaf students now attend residential schools compared to 46 percent in 1970."

It is critical at this time that the Washington State School for the Deaf evaluate its role within the educational service delivery system for deaf/hard of hearing children in Washington State. On March 15, 1985, the regular session of the 49th Legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill Number 3797. This bill established the state schools for the deaf and blind as independent agencies. The following new section was added to Chapter 72-40 RCW:

> "In addition to the powers and duties under section 15 of this act, the superintendent of each school shall:
>
> (1) Monitor the location and educational placement of each student reported to the superintendents by the educational service district superintendents;
>
> (2) Provide information about educational programs, instructional techniques, materials, equipment, and resources available to students with visual or auditory impairments to the parent or guardian, educational service district superintendent, and the superintendent of the school district where the student resides; and
>
> (3) Serve as a consultant to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and assist school districts in improving their instructional programs for students with visual or hearing impairments."

The following recommendations will enhance and add to Section 17 of Senate Bill 3797. There are three primary concerns which the superintendent has recommended to seriously consider for the welfare and benefit of the deaf/hard of hearing children in Washington State:

- Identification of deaf and hard of hearing children;
- WSSD as a statewide resource center on deafness; and
- On-campus activities

RECOMMENDATION 25: Identification

A. WSSD should be the responsible agency to identify deaf/hard of hearing youngsters ages 0-3 through inter-agency coordination with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and other appropriate agencies. A direct service parent/infant program statewide should be developed and implemented by WSSD. Coordination should be established with agencies which are presently providing parent/infant services in some parts of the state, such as:

    - The Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center Parent/Infant Program (Seattle); and
    - The University of Washington - Early Childhood Home Instruction Program for the Hearing-Impaired Infants and Their Families and other service delivery programs as appropriate.

    Communication disorder specialists, audiologists, public health nurses, doctors and other professionals who have daily contact with this unique population should be utilized in the identification process.

B. In addition to on-going child find activities, WSSD should work with OSPI and LEAs to develop a mechanism for tracking all school age deaf/hard of hearing students. There is a concern that a large number of school age students are "jumping from program to program."

RECOMMENDATION 26: Statewide Resource Center

WSSD should develop its ability to be a statewide resource center on deafness by:

A. Strengthening existing resources to provide a multi-faceted assessment team for students and supporting statewide and regional efforts to establish additional assessment teams in conjunction with the public schools. Assessment teams to be comprised of:

    - A Psychologist;
    - An Educational Specialist trained in deafness;

- A Language Specialist;
- An Educational Audiologist;
- A School Nurse; and
- A Physical Therapist.

B. Providing technical assistance to LEAs in conjunction with OSPI.

C. In conjunction with OSPI, providing inservice training opportunities for LEA staff to address issues related to statewide communication standardization (See Recommendation 16, sign language skills and usage.) and curriculum sharing and deaf awareness.

D. Expanding the repository of curriculum and auditory materials for loan to:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs);
- Educational Service Districts (ESDs);
- Parents; and
- Professionals.

E. WSSD Parent Program should coordinate with existing parent service programs statewide to address needs of parents in obtaining information on the following:

- Parents' rights and responsibilities;
- Deaf awareness and communication; and
- National, statewide and local resources, services, organizations and activities related to deafness and parenting deaf children.

F. Assist in focusing educational programs on what is the most appropriate educational program for each child, and monitoring this need on an ongoing basis. If children are not served, identifying those children and seeing that appropriate services are provided. Involving the student's home district in the IEP process.

RECOMMENDATION 27: On Campus Activities

On-Campus Activities that should be considered:

A. WSSD must be in compliance with PL 94-142. Some actions to assure compliance include:

- Compliance monitoring of all programs on a regular basis;

- Developing a suspension/expulsion procedure in accordance with and in the spirit of PL 94-142. The superintendent and board of trustees should research and develop specific procedures for management of behavior problems and social skills programs to assist students in managing their own behavior;

- Implementing intensive inservice training on Section 504 regulations and PL 94-142 with all certified staff, stressing the spirit and intent of the law;

- Providing in-service training to all staff at the school on the various forms of physical and emotional abuse, the law, personal and professional liability, procedures for reporting, and psychological and physical (medical) impact on children; and

- Developing formal procedures for working through all complaints of abuse. The procedure should assign specific staff responsibilities.

B. It is recommended that the Board of Trustees and the Governor's Office assist the WSSD Superintendent in developing a comprehensive management team for the school that:

- Considers needs of students;

- Follows sound management principles with clear lines of authority and responsibilities; and

- Is cost effective.

The superintendent should be empowered to restructure, change positions and position titles of the management team as necessary.

C. WSSD will address the need for an ongoing in-service training program for all school staff to include, but not be limited to, the following topics:

- Sign Language;

- Psychological/social aspects of deafness;

- Deaf culture;

- Crisis management/mental health issues;

- Human development;

- Recreation and use of leisure time;

- Behavior management/discipline; and

- Parent-school relationships.

D. WSSD staff should be required to demonstrate through an evaluation, the ability to understand and use American Sign Language. Staff members found not to have appropriate skills should be mandated to acquire these skills through a program to be provided by the school. Special considerations should be given to those staff who have most frequent contact with the students at the school. The following staff should be included in this program:

- House parents;
- Counselors;
- Teachers;
- Teacher aides;
- Nurses;
- Administrators; and
- Mental health professionals.

This does not preclude the use of manually coding signing systems in the instructional program. The school administration and board of trustees would determine instructional curriculum.

E. It is recognized that response to most if not all of the concerns and recommendations listed will have a fiscal impact. The Board of Trustees, GCDE, and others interested in the school should work diligently to maintain adequate funding for WSSD to carry out its mission. Close collaboration between the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office (OSPI) and the WSSD's superintendent is necessary to explore available resources to assist the school. Appropriation of funds for specific activities prior to implementation of recommended actions is necessary. The WSSD must be given appropriations and mandates to coordinate services with OSPI, DDD and the LEAs.

F. The Superintendent and other WSSD professionals are to become involved in appropriate professional and community organizations. WSSD should be well represented to and actively involved in organizations such as the Washington Association of School Administrators, the Association of Washington School Principals, etc.

CHAPTER 7

RESOURCE COORDINATION AND NETWORKING

ISSUE: There is a need to establish and promote resource coordination and networking to achieve better services and progress in education.

BACKGROUND:

Deaf/hard of hearing individuals are a small incidence population with a clearly identified culture and community. Access to services and information is a unique problem because of the essence of the disability is its impact on communication.

Services and information for the deaf/hard of hearing community are provided by various separate governmental, educational, community, and non-profit organizations. These separate bodies of authority and influence lack overall coordination. There are therefore, problems in effecting positive change for deaf/hard of hearing individuals in Washington State. Compounding this lack of coordination in resources, is the need to enhance comprehensive and effective networking among professionals and members of the community.

Small, but diverse, groups of individuals seek to impact and improve education and services to the deaf/hard of hearing population. These groups of consumers, parents, professionals, public service and school personnel, represent such agencies as the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Social and Health Services, and organizations such as the Washington State Association of the Deaf, Washington Association of Educators of the Hearing Impaired and Washington State Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Through these groups numerous projects and studies have been undertaken, advisory committees have been established, meetings have been held, and recommendations made. These activities have had little real impact and seldom result in the implementation of new programs or effective change. Examples of the foregoing are Troubled Deaf Youth, Regional Education Program Study, Children and Family Services Task Force Report, and Washington State Hearing Impaired Services Organization Educational Guidelines.

Without constructive networking and a proper forum to address common needs and goals for better services and education, progress will continue to be slow, at best. Public and private funds will be wasted as recommendations go unheeded for lack of communication or authority if this condition continues.

RECOMMENDATION 28: GCDE Committee on Deaf/Hard of Hearing Youth

It is recommended that the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE) establish an ongoing committee on Deaf/Hard of Hearing Youth for the purpose of improving all programs. This committee should identify organizations and key contact persons who are involved in the provision of services, to form a representative membership. The committee should identify, collect and review studies on services for deaf/hard of hearing youth. It should also be responsible for disseminating information.

NOTES:

1. Suggested representation on this subcommittee by service providers should include, but not be limited to the following:

    - The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
    - The Washington State School for the Deaf;
    - The Educational Service Districts;
    - The Local Education Agencies/Co-ops;
    - The Washington State Programs for Deaf-Blind Children; and
    - The Department of Social and Health Services:
        - The Division of Developmental Disabilities;
        - The Division of Mental Health;
        - The Division of Children and Family Services;
        - The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
        - The Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation, and
        - The Office of Deaf Services.

2. Specific duties of the subcommittee may include the following:

    - Identify projects, conferences, general information materials;
    - Annually develop and disseminate a Washington State resource directory -- similar to the American Annals of the Deaf;
    - Promote and encourage statewide regional cooperative secondary programs for deaf students;
    - Recommend to the Governor a state commission for the deaf or other statewide coordinating authority;

- Analyze current agency/organization resources to identify services, programs, gaps, duplication, and promote reorganization, coordination and cooperation;

- Develop a workable interagency cooperation agreement; and

- Develop a statewide network to address legislative and administrative issues related to services for deaf/hard of hearing individuals.

RECOMMENDATION 29: Gubernatorial Study on Statewide Coordination of Services

It is recommended that the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment ask the Governor to conduct a formal study and to make recommendations regarding statewide coordination and administration of services for deaf/hard of hearing youth.

APPENDIX NO. 1

PROJECT NOTES

This report was prepared by volunteers serving on the Work Group on Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth, sponsored by the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE), Washington State Employment Security Department. The project was proposed to the Committee in October 1985, by GCDE Member Leon Curtis, State Coordinator of Deaf Services, Department of Social and Health Services. Led by Patty Hughes, Community Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Work Group met regularly in 1985 and 1986 to explore and define issues related to education of deaf and hard of hearing children in Washington State.

In order to prepare the recommendations contained in this report, the Work Group formed five sub-groups which met independently to address the following topics: Least Restrictive Environment, Early Intervention, Today's Child, Support Services, and Interagency Coordination.

Staff support for this project was provided by Molly Phillips, Program Coordinator, GCDE. Word processing was provided by Sandra Abitz, Word Processing Supervisor, Employment Security Department. Editing contributed by Jone Borhek, GCDE member, and by Mildred Johnson.

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DEFINITIONS IN THE WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

The following excerpts are from the State of Washington Rules and Regulations for Programs Providing Services to Children with Handicapping, Chapter 392-171, 173 WAC (Washington Administrative Code)

WAC 392-171-436 Definition and eligibility criteria for deaf.

Deaf students are those students who have a documented hearing impairment which is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with our without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.

All students considered for initial placement in special education as deaf shall be assessed and determined eligible for special education and related services according to the following:

(1) A current evaluation by a qualified audiologist which describes and confirms that the hearing impairments are so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification and which prevents the auditory channel from being the primary mode of learning speech and language and adversely affects educational performance;

(2) Current assessment of level of academic achievement as measured by standardized tests appropriate to age level and administered individually;

(3) A current evaluation which considers and describes the student's social and emotional behaviors and which provides any implementation for educational planning;

(4) A current assessment of language developed as measured by standardized tests or professionally recognized scales appropriate to age level and administered individually; and

(5) A current vision screening report [Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.13.070(7). 80-11-054 (Order 80-31), and 392-171-436, filed 8/19/80.]

WAC 392 171-441 Definition and eligibility criteria for hard of hearing.

Hard of hearing students are those students who have a hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which adversely affects the student's educational performance.

All students considered for initial placement in special education as hard of hearing shall be assessed and determined eligible for special education and related services according to the following:

(1) A current evaluation by a qualified audiologist which describes and confirms that the student:

(a) Has an organic hearing loss in excess of 20 dB better ear average in the speech range (500, 1,000, 2,000 Hz), unaided; or

(b) Has a history of fluctuating hearing loss which has interrupted the normal acquisition of speech and language and continues to be a part of educational planning.

(2) A current assessment of level of academic achievement as measured by standardized tests appropriate to age level and administered individually.

(3) A current evaluation which describes and confirms the student's social and emotional behaviors and which provides any implications for educational planning.

(4) A current assessment of language development as measured by standardized tests or professionally recognized scales appropriate to age level and administered individually.

(5) A current vision screening report.

Each school district shall ensure that the hearing aids worn by deaf and hearing impaired students in school are functioning properly. [Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.13.070(7). 80-11-054 (Order 80-31), and 392-171-441, filed 8/19/80.]

WAC 392-171-471 Least Restrictive Environment.

The placement and provision of services to each handicapped student shall be in his or her least restrictive environment as follows:

(1) Educational setting - Each handicapped student shall be placed:

(a) In the regular educational environment with non-handicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs, unless it can be demonstrated by the school district that the nature or severity of the student's disability is such that his or her education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily; and

(b) In the school which he or she would attend if not handicapped, unless his or her individualized education program requires some other arrangement. If some other arrangement is required, the student shall be placed in the appropriate educational program that is as close to the student's home as is reasonably possible.

(2) Nonacademic settings - Each handicapped student shall be provided nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities conducted by the school district (e.g., meals, recess, recreation, athletics, counseling, transportation, student club activities, etc.) with nonhandicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student. [Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.13.070(7). 80-11-054 (Order 80-31), and 392-171-471, filed 8/19/80.]

WAC 392-171-476 Continuum of Alternative Placements.

A continuum of alternative placement options shall be made available as is necessary to meet the needs of the district's handicapped students for special education and related services.

The option shall include instructions in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions, and shall provide for supplementary services such as resource room or itinerant instruction in conjunction with regular class placement. [Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.13.070(7). 80-11-054 (Order 80-31), and 392-171-476, filed 8/19/80.]

WAC 392-171-481 Placement Options--Selection--Required Considerations.

(1) The placement of each handicapped student shall be determined annually at a meeting conducted pursuant to WAC 392-171-456.

(2) The selection of the appropriate placement option or options for each handicapped student shall be based upon:

(a) The student's individualized education program;

(b) The least restrictive environment requirements of WAC 392-171-471;

(c) The option or combination of options that provides a reasonably high probability of assisting the student to attain his or her annual goals; and

(d) A consideration of any potential harmful effect on the student or on the quality of services which he or she needs. [Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.13.070(7). 80-11-054 (Order 80-31), and 392-171-481, filed 8/19/80. Formerly WAC 392-171-460. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.13.010 and 28A.13.070(7). 78-11-074 (Order 11-78), and 392-171-460, filed 10/31/78.]